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Panama: Discussion of military base treaty may be reopened. (Page 5)



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Panama: Foreign Minister Eleta apparently intends to reopen discussions of one controversial point in the draft treaty dealing with US retention of military bases in Panama.

Eleta claims that the map of prospective land transfers shows larger military base areas and smaller areas of territory to be jointly administered than were agreed to by the US and Panamanian negotiators. The chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the National Assembly said the defense arrangement depicted on the map is unacceptable, according to members of Panama's treaty negotiating team.

Meanwhile, many government leaders are having second thoughts about plans for handling the treaties. They do not want President Robles to leave the country for a signing ceremony in Washington, and they believe the ratification process should be slowed down so that the drafts may be more thoroughly studied by key government officials.

[redacted] Robles has approved serial publication of the drafts in the conservative paper La Estrella beginning today or tomorrow. Robles may have taken this step to counter the furor being created by the open circulation of unauthorized versions by opponents of the treaties. [redacted]

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